

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 01038 231444Z

42

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9034

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1038

EXDIS

BRUSSELS FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, SREF, UR

SUBJ: PROMINENT JEWISH DISSIDENTS TO BE PERMITTED TO EMIGRATE

1. SUMMARY. IN THE LAST FEW DAYS FOUR PROMINENT MOSCOW DISSIDENTS, AMONG THEM ALEKSANDR LUNTS, HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THEY WILL SOON RECEIVE PERMISSION TO LEAVE THE USSR. THE OTHER THREE DISSIDENTS ARE IGOR' ABRAMOVICH, ALEKSANDR DYMSHITS, AND BORIS LAPIDUS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN CONVERSATION JANUARY 22, LUNTS TOLD US THAT HE HAD BEEN CALLED TO OVIR ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21. SINCE OVIR DOES NOT NORMALLY WORK THAT DAY, LUNTS SAID HE HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO BE CONDUCTED FROM OVIR TO KGB HEADQUARTERS FOR AN INTERROGATION. TO HIS SURPRISE, HE WAS RECEIVED BY THE HEAD OF THE MOSCOW OVIR WHO TOLD HIM THAT HE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY SUBMIT ALL OF HIS DOCUMENTATION AS HE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE. IN FACT, THE OFFICIAL ADDED, "YOU MUST BE OUT OF HERE BEFORE THE CONGRESS." WHEN LUNTS EXPLAINED THAT THERE WOULD BE ONE DOCUMENT MISSING, A CERTIFICATE FROM HIS FORMER WIFE, AND THAT HE MIGHT HAVE TROUBLE GETTING IT, THE OFFICIAL ASKED FOR HIS EX-WIFE'S TELEPHONE NUMBER AND STATED THAT HE WOULD HIMSELF SEE TO IT THAT ALL OF THE NECESSARY  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 01038 231444Z

DOCUMENTS WERE INCLUDED IN HIS DOSSIER. LUNTS, HIS WIFE,

AND HIS 18-YEAR-OLD SON, PLAN TO LEAVE WITHIN TWO WEEKS.

3. THE ENTIRE MOSCOW JEWISH DISSIDENT COMMUNITY (OF ALL TENDENCIES) APPEARS BOTH ASTONISHED AND PLEASED THAT LUNTS, ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE OF THE JEWISH DISSIDENTS, SHOULD BE ABLE TO EMIGRATE. THEY ARE ALSO SURPRISED AT THE OTHER THREE CASES ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN SOME PRIOR RUMORS THAT ABRAMOVICH MIGHT BE ALLOWED SOON TO LEAVE.

4. LUNTS SAYS THAT HE HAS NO IDEA WHY HE WAS ALLOWED TO EMIGRATE BUT THINKS THAT THE FACT THAT HE HAS COUSINS WHO ARE CONSTITUENTS OF CONGRESSMAN VANIK MAY HAVE PLAYED A ROLE IN THE SOVIET DECISION. THIS VIEW IS SHARED BY NONE OF THE OTHER PROMINENT "REFUSENIKS" WITH WHOM WE TALKED LAST NIGHT. (ABOUT 30 OF THEM WERE GATHERED AT THE LUNTS' FLAT TO CELEBRATE). THEY FEEL THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES WISH TO PRESENT A CASE FOR THEIR COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT. IN THE SPECIFIC CASE OF LUNTS, THEY FEEL THAT HIS ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF DISSIDENT JEWS AND HIS NUMEROUS CONTACTS WITH WESTERN RESIDENTS IN MOSCOW MAY HAVE PROMPTED THE AUTHORITIES TO DECIDE THAT HE POSED LESS OF A PROBLEM TO THEM ONCE OUTSIDE OF THE SOVIET UNION THAN IF HE REMAINED. THERE WAS UNANIMITY AMONG THOSE TO WHOM WE TALKED THAT LUNTS' PERMISSION WAS NOT DIRECTLY TIED TO THE VISIT OF SECRETARY KISSINGER ALTHOUGH SEVERAL OF THE DISSIDENTS PRESENT SAID THAT THEY THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE PART OF A SOVIET DECISION TO SHOW THE APPEARANCE OF IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE USA.

5. MOSCOW "REFUSENIKS" ARE, NOT SURPRISINGLY, PERENNIALY PESSIMISTIC AND DO NOT FEEL THAT THESE EXIT PERMISSION MARK THE START OF A WHOLESALE EXODUS OF "REFUSENIK" JEWS. OUR SOURCES WOULD AGREE THAT THERE HAD BEEN A GENUINE CHANGE IN SOVIET EMIGRATION POLICY ONLY AFTER SOME 30-50 OF MOSCOW'S HARD-CORE "REFUSENIK" COMMUNITY HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO LEAVE.

6. COMMENT: THIS MARKS THE FIRST DEPARTURE OF A PROMINENT MUSCOVITE JEWISH DISSIDENT IN APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR. IT  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 01038 231444Z

IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT. HOWEVER, IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY THAT IT MARKS A NEW TREND. IN ANY CASE, WE SEE IT AS A GESTURE CLEARLY LINKED IN ITS TIMING TO THE SECRETARY'S VISIT. WE ALSO FEEL THAT IT IS RELATED TO THE ATTEMPT TO GET A BETTER PUBLIC RELATIONS POSTURE WITH REGARD TO CSCE, ESPECIALLY AS THE CPSU CONGRESS DRAWS NEARER.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** JEWS, TRAVEL CONTROLS, EMIGRANTS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 JAN 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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